

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-06

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FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8454

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INFO AMEMBASSY VIENNA

UNCLAS SOFIA 1401

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: BEXP, BU, OVIP (POPOV, IVAN)

SUBJECT: TRADE OPPORTUNITIES WITH RODOPA STATE ECONOMIC ENTERPRISE

VIENNA FOR EWTC

1. DURING CALL ON DIRECTOR GENERAL OF "RODOPA" STATE ENTERPRISE BY AMBASSADOR AUG 9, FOLLOWING OPPORTUNITIES FOR US BUSINESS EMERGED. (DEPT WILL RECALL THAT RODOPA IS ORGANIZATION NEGOTIATING WITH US FIRM FOR TURNKEY PROJECT OF MAJOR MEAT PROCESSING UNIT. CF. SOFIA 1365 WHICH ALSO REPORTED ANGLE IN CONNECTION WITH POPOV VISIT.)
2. PIGS. RODOPA SEEKS INFORMATION ON AMERICAN HYBRIDS WHICH IT MIGHT BUY IN VERY NEAR FUTURE. GREAT BRITIAN IS PRESENT SUPPLIER HYBRID PIGS TO BULGARIA.
3. DAIRY CATTLE. BULGARIA PRESENTLY BUYING COWS FROM US AND CANADA AND IS SATISFIED WITH SHIPMENTS RECEIVED. IT WILL CONTINUE IMPORTS HOWEVER AND WOULD BE INTERESTED IN CONTACTS WITH OTHER SUPPLIERS.
4. YOGHURT POWDER. THIS TOOK UP LARGEST PART OF CONVERSATION, WITH DIRECTOR GENERAL NENKO LECHEV DISPLAYING EAGERNESS FOR LICENSING ARRANGEMENT WITH US FIRM FOR DRINK WHICH IS ABOUT HALFWAY BETWEEN YOGHURT AND BUTTERMILK. IT IS PROBABLY BEST DESCRIBED AS "YOGHURT MILK" AND HAS ALLEGEDLY SUPERIOR NUTRITIOUS, HEALTH-

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GIVING, LIFE-PROLONGING ETC. FEATURES, AND AS DEMON-

STRATED IS HIGHLY PALATABLE AND REFRESHING BEVERAGE. LECHEV SAID HE HAD BEEN NEGOTIATING INCONCLUSIVELY WITH PEPSICO, CARNATION AND MOST RECENTLY WITH BEATRICE FOODS. HE APPEARED DISAPPOINTED THAT NONE OF THESE CONTACTS SEEMS TO BE YIELDING RESULTS AND WOULD BE GLAD IF OTHER POTENTIAL LICENSEES COULD BE ALERTED TO WHAT HE CONSIDERS SIGNIFICANT BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY. BULGARIAN BIOLOGISTS, HE SAID, HAVE DISCOVERED PROCESS TO PUT TWO "BACILLUS BULGARICUS" INGREDIENTS OF YOGHURT DRINK IN STABLE POWDER FORM. POWDER IS NOT SIMPLY DRIED CULTURE BUT COMPLEX RESULT OF CONSIDERABLE RESEARCH, LECHEV SAID, PERMITTING PROCESSING BY MIXING WITH MILK EITHER IN BULK OR IN SMALL QUANTITIES IN THE CONSUMER'S HOME. MARKET FOR THIS PRODUCT MAY BE MORE RECEPTIVE IN LIGHT OF RECENT SCIENTIFIC FINDINGS THAT YOGHURT MAY REDUCE CHOLESTEROL LEVEL. REQUEST DOC CHECK WITH BEATRICE IF THERE IS STILL INTEREST AND IF NOT ALERT OTHER FIRMS POTENTIALLY INTERESTED IN LICENSING ARRANGEMENT. NOTE THAT ACCORDING TO REFTEL LECHEV MAY BE PART OF POPOV PARTY. HERZ

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